REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The Applicants have carefully considered this Application in connection with the Examiner's Action and respectfully request reconsideration of this Application in view of the foregoing amendment and the following remarks. The Applicants also file concurrently herewith a "Petition for Revival of An Application for Patent Abandoned Unintentionally Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.137(b)" for this Application.

The Applicants originally submitted Claims 1-19 in the Application. The Applicants have amended Claims 1, 8 and 15 and have cancelled Claim 7 without prejudice or disclaimer. Accordingly, Claims 1-6 and 8-19 are currently pending in the Application. Support for the present Amendments can be found, for example, in Fig. 1, paragraphs [0023-0025] and in Figure 4, paragraphs [0026-0027].

I.   Formal Matters and Objections

Claim 7 is objected to under 37 C.F.R. §1.75 as being a substantial duplicate of Claim 5. (*See* Examiner's Action, page 2.) In response, the Applicants cancel Claim 7.

Claims 8, 9, 10, and 11 are objected to under 37 C.F.R. §1.75 as being a substantial duplicate of Claims 1, 2, 3, and 4, respectively. (*See* Examiner's Action, page 2.) In response, the Applicants amend independent Claim 8, from which Claims 9, 10, and 11 depend. Amended independent Claim 8 now includes claim language and features not claimed in amended independent Claim 1. Therefore, the Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the objection of pending Claims 8, 9, 10, and 11.

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II.   Rejection of Claims 1-19 under 35 U.S.C. §103

The Examiner has rejected Claims 1-19 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable

over U.S. Patent 6, 741,989 to Seltzer *et al.* ("Seltzer") in view of U.S. Patent 5,301,105 No. to

Cummings, Jr., ("Cummings"), U.S. Patent No. 6,067,522 to Warady *et al.,* ("Warady") and U.S.

Patent Publication No. 2003/0046422 to Narayanan *et al.* ("Narayanan.")

Claim 1 is directed to a method for centralizing a capital expenditure approval process for

expenditures by employees in various departments of a company. Amended Claim 1 includes: "c)...

using determined factors to further determine a defined number of levels of approvals required for

each capital expenditure of a plurality of capital expenditures," and "f) using an online computer

system to compare the inputted department identification the factors which are to be considered as a

prerequisite of the approval of a desired capital expenditure with a database and generating a table of

requisite approvers for the desired capital expenditure based on at least the requisite number of

approvals."

The Examiner states that Seltzer teaches:

> c) using the factors to determine a defined number of levels of approvals required for
> each capital expenditure (see column 3, lines 9-11, column 2, lines 46-53, and column
> 6, lines 45-61, claim 29, where "approve or disapprove of a proposed expenditure
> within the partnership based on the risk factor table" and "including the key factor
> partners should be aware of, an authorization for expenditure" is equivalent of using
> the factors to determine a defined number of levels of approvals required for each
> capital expenditure." (*See* Examiner's Action, page 3.)

In the present Application:

> [026] As also illustrated in Figure 2 and Figure 2A, form 12 requires the employee
> to identify his/her department of employment 28. As shown in Figure 2A, the

employee selects the department of employment from a preprogrammed drop down list of department choices.... The selection of a department from the drop down list is the sole decider of which approvals are required because each of the departments shown at 28 in Figure 2A are preprogrammed to select approval chains. In one embodiment of the invention, the approval chains may be based upon the dollar value of the purchase ... .

[027] Figure 4 shows an embodiment of 10 approval chains which are stored in the database. The approval chains are designated as rows 1 to 10. Each row shows five columns 40, 41, 42, 43, 44. The first column 40 identifies the department of the employee making the purchasing request. Columns 41, 42, 43, and 44 specify which persons must approve based upon the type of equipment and the purchase price of the equipment ... .

The Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner regarding the characterization of Column 3, lines 9-11 of Seltzer. In this passage, Seltzer states: "The authorization for expenditure page 42 further includes a link where *the user* may add 56 additional authorizations for expenditure for partnership approval." (*See* Column 3, lines 9-11; emphasis added.) The Applicants respectfully contend that in this passage of Seltzer, no levels of approvals are disclosed or suggested. Although 'partnership approval' is sought for additional expenditures, Seltzer does not disclose or suggest *levels of approvals* for any of the expenditures.

The Applicants also respectfully disagree with the Examiner regarding the characterization of Col. 2, lines 46-53 of Seltzer, as provided below. In Seltzer,

From the partner exchange main page, a registered user may choose from a variety of information exchange tools, denoted as links on the main page. Examples of information exchange tools include, for example, variance reports options 34, choose glance charts 36, a user information page 38, an information page including key factors partners should be aware of 40, an authorization for expenditure page 42, and a policy page 44.

The Applicants respectfully state that the above does not disclose or suggest *levels* of approvals. There is language of "including key factors partners should be aware of 40", but there is no disclosure or suggestion of *levels* of approvals, just "partners," which represents just a single level of approval.

The Applicants also respectfully disagree with the Examiner regarding the characterization of Claim 29 of Seltzer, which includes prompting *an authorized user through at least one authorization for expenditure web page displayed on a client system to approve or disapprove of a proposed expenditure within a partnership based on the risk factor table." (See* Claim 29 of Seltzer, emphasis added.)

The Applicants respectfully state that the above does not disclose or suggest *levels* of approvals. There is language of "*to approve or disapprove of a proposed expenditure within the partnership based on the risk factor table*", but there is no disclosure or suggestion of *levels* of approvals, just "expenditure within the partnership," which represents just a single level of approval.

The Examiner states that Seltzer also teaches:

"f) said created inputted factors within the database and generating a table of requisite approvers for said expenditure (see Fig. 3, column 2, lines 46-53, column 3, lines 12-22, and column 4, lines 38-49.)" (*See* Examiner's Action, page 4.)

The Applicants respectfully disagree with the above characterization of Seltzer in view of amended Claim 1. Fig. 3 of Seltzer, cited by the Examiner, is directed to a " web page welcoming a registered user" (*See* col. 1, line 59), but it does not disclose or suggest "f) using the online

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computer system to compare the inputted department identification and the factors which are to be considered as a prerequisite of the approval of the desired capital expenditure with the database *and generating a table of requisite approvers* ... .

Furthermore, as discussed above, column 2, lines 46-53, of Seltzer, cited by the Examiner, are directed to partners, but not to generating a table of requisite approvers. Furthermore, column 2, lines 46-53, also do not generate a table of requisite approvals for the desired capital expenditure *based on at least the requisite number of approvals*.

Column 3, lines 12-22 of Seltzer, also cited by the Examiner, state:

> FIG. 3 is an exemplary example of a main page 70 as described above. Page 70 includes formatted information from database 16 (shown in FIG. 1) including partner names 72, which can act as a link to an information page (described in FIG. 4 below), a date each partner last uploaded data 74 to database 16, when was each partner's most recent accounting period 76, and the choices of monitoring tools 78 available to each partner. Page 70 is configured such that only a partial list of the monitoring tools 78 available to the partners are displayed.

However, the Applicants respectfully contend that column 3, lines 12-22 of Seltzer are directed to a database 16 and choices of monitoring tools 78 available to each partner, but not to generating a table of requisite approvers. Furthermore, column 3, lines 12-22 also do not generate a table of requisite approvals for the capital expenditure *based on at least the requisite number of approvals*.

Column 4, lines 38-49 of Seltzer, cited by the Examiner, refers to Claim 1 of Seltzer. The selected section of Claim 1 recites:

> providing forms stored within the server as web pages for the insertion of updated partnership business data and causing the forms to be displayed on a client

system, at least one of the forms including an add authorization for expenditure form;

uploading forms that include updated partnership business data intended for use by other authorized users within the partnership to the server, where the updated partnership business data is stored within the database;

formatting the partnership business data uploaded using web pages stored within the server ...

The Applicants respectfully contend that the cited claim language is directed to uploading forms for use by authorized users within a partnership, but not to generating *a table of requisite approvers*. Furthermore, column 4, lines 38-49 of Seltzer also do not generate a table of requisite approvals for the capital expenditure *based on at least the requisite number of approvals* as is claimed in Claim 1.

Nor does Cummings compensate for the deficiencies of Seltzer. The Examiner does not cite Cummings for either "c) using the determined factors to further determine a defined number of levels of approvals required for each capital expenditure..." or for "f) ... and the factors which are to be considered as the prerequisite of the desired capital expenditure with the database and generating a table of requisite approvers for the desired capital expenditure..." Furthermore, the Examiner also does not cite Cummings for "f) ... *based on at least the requisite number of approvals*" as is claimed in Claim 1 as currently amended.

The Applicants respectfully state that Warady does not compensate for the deficiencies of Szeltzer. The Examiner states that Warady teaches:

"f) generating a table of requisite approvers for said expenditure (see column 5, lines 34-49, where 'table corresponding to a flexible spending' is equivalent of 'table for said expenditure');" (*See* Examiner's Action, page 5.)

Column 5, lines 34-49 of Warady state:

As another example, a benefit table corresponding to a life insurance (e.g., self, spouse, or child life insurance) or disability benefit could include, in addition to some or all of the information described above for the medical benefit table, minimum or maximum ages for receiving the benefit under each plan and a percentage of a maximum benefit available to the employee based upon, for example, the employee's age. As a further example, a benefit table corresponding to a flexible spending account (e.g., a dependent care or health care reimbursement account) benefit could include, again in addition to some or all of the information described above for the medical benefit table, maximum benefits available to the employee for each plan as well as a range of possible employee contributions for each plan.

The Applicants respectfully state that they are unable to find in the above passage "generating a table of requisite approvers ..." as claimed in section f) of Claim 1. Although the cited passage refers to a medical benefit table, this is not a table of requisite approvers. Furthermore, Furthermore, the Examiner also does not cite Warady for "f) ... generating a table of requisite approvers for the desired capital expenditure *based on at least the requisite number of approvals"* as is claimed in Claim 1 as currently amended.

Nor does Narayanam compensate for the deficiencies of Seltzer. The Examiner does not cite Narayanam for either "c) using the determined factors to further determine a defined number of levels of approvals required for each capital expenditure" or for "f) ... and the factors which are to be considered as a prerequisite of the approval of the desired capital expenditure with the database and generating a table of requisite approvers for the desired capital expenditure..." Furthermore, the Examiner also does not cite Narayanam for "f) ... *based on at least the requisite number of approvals"* as is claimed in Claim 1 as currently amended.

Seltzer, individually or in combination with Cummings, Warady, and Narayanan , fails to teach or suggest the invention recited in independent Claim1 and its dependent claims, when considered as a whole. Furthermore, for at least these reasons, Seltzer, individually or in combination with Cummings, Warady, and Narayanan fails to teach or suggest the invention recited in independent Claims 8, 12, and 16 and their dependent claims, when consider as a whole. Claims 1-6 and 8-19 are therefore not obvious in view of Seltzer, Cummings, Warady, and Narayanan.

In view of the foregoing remarks, the cited references do not support the Examiner's rejection of Claims 1-6 and 8-19 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a). The Applicants therefore respectfully request the Examiner withdraw the rejection.

III.   Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendment and remarks, the Applicants now see all of the Claims currently pending in this Application to be in condition for allowance and therefore earnestly solicit a Notice of Allowance for Claims 1-6 and 8-19.

The Applicants request the Examiner to telephone the undersigned attorney of record at (972) 480-8800 if such would further or expedite the prosecution of the present Application. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees, credits or overpayments to Deposit Account 08-2395.

Respectfully submitted,

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